

# DENTIST CHEWED OUT State bars Tooth Savers founder from practice

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The founder of Tooth Savers, the city's busiest dental clinic, has been banned from dentistry pending a disciplinary hearing.

The charges against the dentist, Dr. Jerry Lynn, represent such a threat to "public health, safety and welfare" that they warrant "emergency action," according to a state Education Department letter obtained by the Daily News.

A spokesman for the department, which is responsible for licensing and disciplining dentists, would say only that the charges would be heard in a closed proceeding.

Lynn - exposed as New York's most-sued dentist in a News series two years ago - didn't return calls.

But at Tooth Savers' W. 57th St. headquarters, his son Mitchell Lynn said The News' series spurred the investigation. "The state was pretty much moving as a result of your article," said Mitchell Lynn, clinic managing director.

The News found that 54 patients filed malpractice suits against Jerry Lynn between September 1990 and 1998. Lynn made payments totaling \$790,482 to settle 34 suits - more payments than any other dentist in the state and all but seven in the nation. Dozens more suits have since been filed against Lynn.

The Education Department has disciplined Lynn three times before the current action on charges that included botching dental procedures, submitting bogus insurance claims and making unsupportable claims in ads.

Mitchell Lynn said other Tooth Savers dentists, not his father, treated most of the patients who sued. He said his father was named in the suits only because he headed the corporation. "These are people who didn't pay their bills," he said. "You turn them over to collection, and they sue you for malpractice."

But numerous patients who sued told The News that Jerry Lynn had treated them.

Mitchell Lynn said his father, now 68, retired rather than battle state regulators again. "Dr. Lynn said he didn't want to fight the system anymore and retired the first of the year," Mitchell Lynn said.

## New ownership

Tooth Savers, which also has an office on W. 96th St., has been sold to Dr. Sol Stolzenberg, a dentist, and continues to treat patients.

The clinics are well-known for ads promising low prices. "Take a bite OUT of your dental bills!" one subway ad says.

Mitchell Lynn said Tooth Savers has thousands of happy customers and treats many poor people free.

"They have pretty much have been coming after him for four decades," he said. "We try to offer a good service at a low fee, and the Establishment doesn't like that."